

Meeting Minutes

Meeting: ABAC
Date: March 15, 2017
Time: 7:30 – 9:30 PM
Attendees: Executive board members: Christopher Tonkin, Jack Johnson, Scott Smith, Stephan Miller, Doug Greenfield, Ron Sender, Phil Goff
Advisory members and other attendees: Nat Strosberg, Rod Holland, Elizabeth Shea, TJ Kelly (COBWEB officer), Maggie Stanley, Adam McNeil, Doug Mayo-Wells, Cecily Miller

February minutes: Approved as amended by Scott and Ron.

COBWEB: The COBWEB officer, TJ Kelly, opened the discussion about Arlington Center and how it is functioning. Stephan reported that the no-turn-on-red signs have been installed and there has indeed been increased compliance among motorists. Scott introduced the problem of bike lanes in the east-bound direction: the lane is available for cyclists from Mass Ave to Swan Place, where many cyclists turn to access the bike path. There is no lane available for cyclists who choose to continue traveling eastward on Mass Ave. ABAC recommends sharrows be installed east of Swan Place.

TAC report: Scott reported that TAC is targeting May for the lights at Swan and Mass Ave. Also, DPW is producing a video demonstrating how to use the Hawk signal. The video will be available on line. Maggie will put the video on the website.

Bike share: Christopher provided a brief recap of the bike share topic, explaining that the town of Arlington was approached by an independent bike share company, Zagster. Lexington is likely to go with Zagster; Arlington is leaning toward setting up a program with Hubway.

The working group for Hubway needs a bit more members; Maggie to join.

The town survey results, including responses to bike share questions, are still being collected and are soon to be tallied.

Snow Removal: Several attendees noted that the bike path was in very good condition today, despite yesterday's storm. Maggie noted that there is a facebook group for discussing the conditions: "Minuteman Bikeway Users."

Rod has been researching standards for bike path snow clearance. He provided some preliminary findings and will summarize his findings in a brief report, which Nat will share with DPW along with an expression of appreciation and gratitude from ABAC for a job well done. Rod will also provide links to the information he has found.

Included in Rod's findings was a report from Mass DOT addressing how to maintain protected bike lanes. Attendees agreed it would be worth aligning with the Mass DOT approach.

Board member replacement: Christopher provided a brief overview of the committee structure, function, and focus. Christopher and other ABAC members explained that the committee meetings are open to all attendees and there are opportunities for participation, regardless of membership on the ABAC board.

Three attendees, all Arlington residents, had applied to be members of the committee: Adam MacNeill, Doug Mayo-Wells, and Elizabeth Shea. The three described their interest in the committee.

The executive committee agreed to discuss the next steps for filling the ABAC vacancy after the meeting.

Winter bike counts: Phil reported on the winter bike count, structured to assess winter bike path use and to assess the path use close to Alewife (i.e. counted at the dog park) vs further along (i.e. counted at Lake St). The count was conducted in early February on a clear, relatively mild day.

Compared to September, pedestrian traffic dropped by about 1/3 and bike traffic dropped by about 2/3. Comparing traffic at locations on the February day: pedestrian traffic drops by 90% from the dog park to Lake St; bike traffic at Lake St is at least 50% of that at the dog park.

Automated bike counts: Following a meeting with MAPC, Nat reported that Arlington will be able to use the automated counter for the spring count. Nat will report back about scheduling a date for the count.

Bike repair facility: The Whole Foods sponsored bike facility is not yet built. Nat discussed it with the Whole Foods representative. The design has changed quite a bit from the original and approved design. Following discussion, the design will be changed back to be closer to the original design.

Bikeway Anniversary Celebration: The event with the lecture by Alan McClennen is being rescheduled (likely in May) to ensure that Jenny Raitt and Adam Chapdelaine can attend. Nat will set the schedule in the coming week. The bikeway end-to-end tour will be in late September / early October. It will likely be the Saturday after town day. The entire community will be invited and town officials will be invited to celebrate in their respective towns.

The Annual Social: Rescheduling is tied to the Alan McClennen lecture (see above).

Bike Arlington Tour: Tour date is to be May 21. Test ride is to be April 23. Proposed tour is to include Great Meadows. Meet at Hurd Field; finish at Old Schwamb Mill. Scott is to check about the possibility of visiting goats along the way.

Art on the bikeway: Cecily Miller, the town public art manager, provided an update on the art projects planned for the section of the bike path between Swan Place and Linwood Street. The art projects—including pop-up projects and a commissioned installation—are part of a collaboration between the Arlington Commission of Arts and Culture and Arlington Public Art and will be coordinated with the 25th bikeway anniversary celebration.

Attendees were enthusiastic and supportive of the projects that Cecily described and previewed. Several attendees suggested it may be worth considering pursuing such projects on an annual basis. In response to a project that may include temporary markings on the path, ABAC recommended that some posted explanations at the Swan Place and Linwood St entrances may be helpful (to explain the purpose and clearly differentiate the art project from official markings).

Broadway and Route 16 intersection: Scott presented a summary of the problem with car, bike, and pedestrian traffic flow at the intersection during rush hour (see attached) and a proposal for restriping the intersection and changing the signaling. Phil proposed changes to the designated parking, bus stop, and cross walk. More specific designs would need to address bike boxes and would need to involve DCR and the Somerville Bike Committee.

Christopher noted that the road is due to be restriped. Officer Kelly thinks (may need to confirm) that the signaling is controlled by DCR.

Attendees were in general agreement about the proposed restriping and movement of parking and bus stop. The group discussed whether the signaling needs to be changed and if the restriping and the changing to the signaling would need to be proposed together. The signal cycle creates confusion for drivers and possible safety concerns for pedestrians. However, changing the signaling may be the most challenging part of a redesign effort. Phil noted that EALS suggests that if the signals are to be resequenced, the pedestrian signal should not immediately follow the signal that leads to traffic turning from Broadway onto Rte 15.

Next steps: bike count / data collection, coordinate with Somerville Bike Committee, Scott and Phil to take the proposal to TAC (possibility for the intersection to be elevated as a priority on the complete streets list of projects).

Alewife Brook Cleanup: Following an earlier ABAC discussion, ABAC will be working with EALS on an Alewife Brook Cleanup. Phil reported that EALS got in touch with the DCR volunteer community coordinator. DCR will provide bags and coordinate trash removal. DCR also mentioned that they may be doing a cleanup themselves. EALS agreed to stay committed to April 22 as the cleanup date. If DCR takes care of the Alewife Brook path, the cleanup day would focus on the minuteman path, from Alewife to Lake St.